2: Morris T-5 (1937)1938 AK5 Lepcha AK5

While the feasting was going on outside the monastery the actual service was carried on in the main room of the building. To us it appeared to be little more than indiscriminate banging of drums and cymbals; but actually the whole order of service is described in detail in a Tibetan book, the instructions in which are carefully followed. From time to time some of the Lamas came out and joined in the general fun and games, but none of the revellers appeared to enter the monastery except to keep the monks' bowls filled with *chi*.

By midday most of the people were more or less tight. I saw a boy of about sixteen attempting to feel the breasts of Tafoor's wife, much to the amusement of the onlookers and the woman herself. She freed herself from his attempted embraces, uncovered one of her breasts and squeezed some milk out of it into her hand. She then ran after the boy and tried to rub the milk on his face. At this there was general laughter; and although a number of old people were present they took no notice; nor was conversation restrained in their presence. Later on in the evening this same boy made some personal remarks about Tafoor's wife again, whereupon she again bared her breast and tried to squeeze some milk into his hat; but he was too quick for her and darted away. There was a great deal of this sort of play, and Dhawa and Sukra Sing said that the conversation was almost exclusively devoted to sex. As Christians they naturally disapproved of this conduct; but even Palden, who is no Puritan and who has lived in a Lepcha village for years, says that this sort of thing never happens in villages in other parts of Sikkim, where women are not even allowed to enter the monastery compound. He was quite genuinely shocked; not so much at the sexual freedom, but at the lack of reverence shown at what is, after all, a religious festival.

A great deal of mess has been made in the monastery garden and it appears to be nobody's duty to clear it up. The place looks like Hampstead Heath after August Bank Holiday, and there is a smell of stale beer about the place.